



A quarterly report on the pursuit of a COMMON VISION for the Trinity River in North Central Texas.

Winter 2009

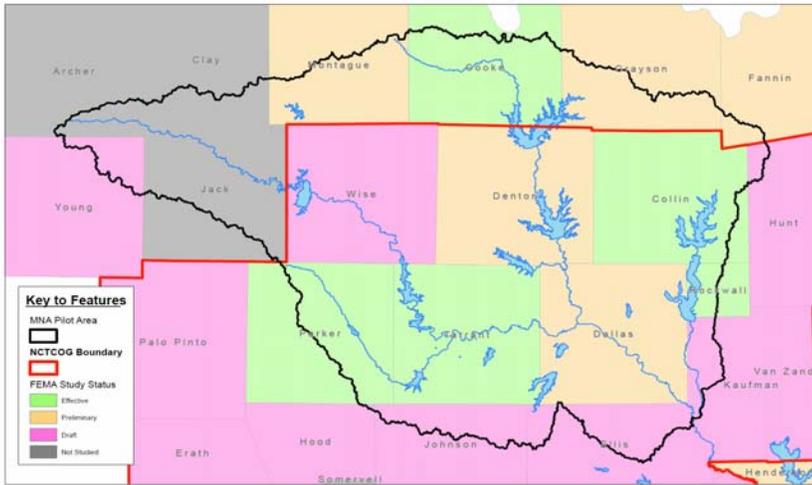
## Final Mapping Plan Identifies Local Mapping Needs

NCTCOG teamed up with the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) this summer to assess flood mapping needs in the Upper Trinity River Basin within the North Central Texas region. This Upper Trinity River Basin Map Needs Assessment (MNA) project entailed the compilation of local mapping needs, the establishment of prioritization criteria in order to compare and rank identified mapping needs, and the creation of a Final Mapping Plan. The Mapping Plan depicts prioritization criteria, financial information, and a Prioritized List of Qualified Map Needs by stream and watershed in a variety of ways (based on weighted prioritization criteria elements and collected needs). These products are available at <http://floodmap.nctcog.org>.

identify mapping needs remaining after Map Mod, serve as a pilot project to kick off the Texas State-wide Map Needs Assessment, define the MNA procedures and process for Texas, and improve efficiencies for future projects in other regions or watersheds.

once their online collection system has been finalized. The process of assessing, prioritizing, seeking funding, and mapping will continue as more mapping needs are collected and updated.

For more information, visit



MNA Project Area Map

The recently completed FEMA Map Modernization (Map Mod) program that resulted in new Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps focused on converting existing flood maps and data into a digital form. Given funding constraints, this FEMA project was unable to address new flood mapping needs. The MNA project goals were to

NCTCOG is continuing efforts to coordinate with the TWDB and FEMA in order to seek funding to finalize detailed studies of stream corridors and to generate better flood maps for areas identified in this Map Needs Assessment. Mapping needs will continue to be collected by the TWDB

<http://floodmap.nctcog.org> or contact Jack Tidwell, Environment and Development Manager, at (817) 695-9220 or [jtidwell@nctcog.org](mailto:jtidwell@nctcog.org) or Audra Valamides, NCTCOG Public Works Coordinator, at (817) 608-2341 or [avalamides@nctcog.org](mailto:avalamides@nctcog.org).



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### Call for Articles!

Are you a participating Trinity River COMMON VISION local government or a professional with a topic you would like to share with the rest of the region? Contact Audra Valamides at [avalamides@nctcog.org](mailto:avalamides@nctcog.org)

## FEMA RAMPP's Up for New Mapping Cycle in Risk MAP

As part of its activities related to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) began the transition from Map Modernization to Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (Risk MAP) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009. The vision for Risk MAP is to work collaboratively with State, local, and tribal entities to deliver quality data that increases public awareness and lead to action that reduces risk to life and property.

The Risk Assessment, Mapping, and Planning

Partners (RAMPP) will provide comprehensive floodplain mapping, GIS, and hazard risk mitigation services for FEMA Region VI (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX). RAMPP is also responsible for operating the Regional Support Centers (RSCs) located near the FEMA Region VI offices, processing Letters of Map Correction, and providing production and technical services for flood insurance studies as well as digital flood insurance rate map production, studies, hazard risk assessment and mitigation planning, outreach, and other services.

In October, the FEMA and the RAMPP team held meetings in Dallas, Collin and Tarrant Counties to discuss their specific mapping goals. Presentations from these meetings can be found on their website at <http://www.rampp-team.com/tx.htm>.

They announced that activities in Dallas County will focus on levee issues while the activities in Collin and Tarrant Counties will utilize information from the recently completed Upper Trinity River Basin Map Needs Assessment to determine mapping priorities.

## Building on a COMMON VISION

In 1989, the [Regional Policy Position on the Trinity River Corridor](#) was approved, with three major policy statements establishing the COMMON VISION Program:

- The Trinity River Corridor is a unique regional resource,
- Local governments must be the stewards of the Trinity River Corridor, and
- Individual local goals can only be achieved through cooperative management.

In 1990, the NCTCOG signed a formal agreement as a "local sponsor" with the U.S. Corps of Engineers for the Upper Trinity River Feasibility Study. In turn,



the NCTCOG signed agreements with 14 cities, counties and special districts to represent their interests.

Committees of elected officials and of floodplain administrators were established to guide the COMMON VISION Program, which promotes a safe, clean, enjoyable, natural and diverse Trinity River. The Program has successfully launched projects such as the Upper Trinity River Feasibility Study, the Corridor Development Certificate (CDC) Program, the Trinity Trails System, the *integrated* Storm Water Management (iSWM) Program and several successful project management plans.

The current Fiscal Year 2010 COMMON VISION work plan calls for revisiting our 20-year-old policy position. An evaluation of the COMMON VISION's strengths and successes, as well as the

program's weaknesses and challenges will be at the heart of this program element. COMMON VISION communities will be interviewed to see how they feel about the program's history to date and assess their interest in ongoing activities. We will be reviewing the institutional structure of the program, including the Flood Management Task Force and the Steering Committee. This effort will produce a blueprint for our continued success through a new long-range policy position for participating communities to consider and NCTCOG Executive Board to adopt.

Other program elements for this year include increased outreach for the Trinity River CDC Process, development of better tracking and reporting systems for floodplain development under the CDC program and a continued partnership with FEMA and the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to provide education on floodplain issues to local communities.

## EPA Announces Plan to Retool and Reinvigorate Clean Water Enforcement Program

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson announced recently that the agency is stepping up its efforts on Clean Water Act enforcement. The Clean Water Action Enforcement Plan is a first step in revamping the compliance and enforcement program. It seeks to improve the protection of the nation's water quality, raise the bar in federal and state performance, and enhance public transparency.

The plan announced today outlines how the agency will strengthen the way it addresses the water pollution challenges of this century. These challenges include pollution caused by numerous, dispersed sources, such as concentrated animal feeding operations, sewer overflows, contaminated water that flows from industrial facilities, construction sites, and runoff from urban streets.

The goals of the plan are to target enforcement to the most significant pollution problems, improve transparency and accountability by providing the public with access to better data on the water quality in their communities, and strengthen enforcement performance at the state and federal levels. Elements of the plan include:

- Developing more comprehensive approaches to ensure enforcement is targeted to the most serious violations and the most significant sources of pollution.
- Working with states to ensure greater consistency throughout the country with respect to compliance and water quality. In addition, ensuring that states are issuing protective permits and taking enforcement to achieve

compliance and remove economic incentives to violate the law.

- Using 21<sup>st</sup> century information technology to collect, analyze and use information in new, more efficient ways and to make that information readily accessible to the public.

Last July, Administrator Jackson directed EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance to develop the plan in response to data showing that the nation's water quality is unacceptably low in many parts of the country.

More information on the plan: <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/civil/cwa/cwaenflplan.html>

## Other Programs Around NCTCOG

### Bike and Pedestrian Planning:

NCTCOG Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation planning efforts are now guided by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. The Veloweb is the NCTCOG's regional plan for bicycle and pedestrian transportation. It includes a 644 mile inter-commoned network of off street trails designed to provide safe and efficient mobility to pedestrians, cyclists and in-line skaters. Mobility 2030: The Metropolitan transportation Plan for the Dallas-Fort Worth Area, 2009 Amendment details the

NCTCOG Veloweb Strategy. There are also numerous funding sources for your community's plans available for review at <http://www.nctcog.org/trans/sustdev/bikeped/index.asp>. For more information, contact Deborah Humphreys at [dhumphreys@nctcog.org](mailto:dhumphreys@nctcog.org) or 817-608-2394.

### Solid Waste Program:

The SEE Less Trash Solid Waste Program is sponsoring several workshops in the coming months:

- January 22nd —Household Hazardous Waste Management Workshop.
- January 28th — Coordinated Criminal Environmental Enforcement
- January 29th—Emerging Trends in Recycling
- February 10th- Pharmaceutical Waste Management Workshop

For workshop content or to register visit: <http://www.nctcog.org/envir/events.asp>

For additional information contact Kathleen Graham at [kgraham@nctcog.org](mailto:kgraham@nctcog.org) or 817-695-9217.

## Building a Future That is Better Than Business As Usual

More than 300 regional stakeholders participated in the “North Texas Alternative Futures” event held Friday, September 18 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Irving to discuss the future of North Texas. The various individuals and organizations in attendance recognized that the best future for our region is one that reflects the interests, goals, and aspirations of our diverse residents, businesses, and stakeholders. This event offered an opportunity for participants to examine the alternatives to “business as usual.”

Mayor Herbert Gears of the City of Irving kicked off the event. Three guest speakers then provided their perspectives on the region’s future. Ebby Halliday, Ebby Halliday Realtors, stressed the importance of water, while Michael Berry, Hillwood Development, and Lois Finkelman, The National Recreation and Park Association, stressed the importance of mobility and natural features. After a brief overview of the four alternative scenarios (Connected Centers, Return on Investment, Diverse, Distinct

Communities, and Green Region), participants broke out into smaller groups to provide feedback on two of the four scenarios. The discussions were interesting and lively.

The groups then convened to hear highlights of the views and opinions shared in the scenarios’ discussion sessions. Mayors Tom Leppert, City of Dallas, and Mike Moncrief, City of Fort Worth, opened the results session, reflecting on their communities’ experiences and the changes they expect in their cities’—and the region’s—future. Finally, Karen Walz, Vision North Texas Project Manager, and Fernando Costa, City of Fort Worth, wrapped up the morning session with a polling exercise and an outlook to the future.



The day’s discussions will help create a valuable new guidebook for our region, “North Texas 2050,” which is scheduled to be presented to the region’s stakeholders at the Regional Summit scheduled for January 22, 2010. The North Texas Alternative Futures Executive Summary was made available to participants and presented key findings from an extensive and collaborative research effort. These key findings were the focus for the discussion sessions that were grouped according to the Alternative Futures.

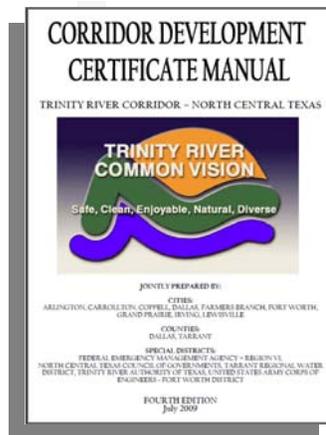
The summaries and reports from the day’s events are available at [www.visionnorthtexas.org](http://www.visionnorthtexas.org). For more information, contact Rob Seeds, Environment and Development Planner, at (817) 695-9224 or [rseeds@nctcog.org](mailto:rseeds@nctcog.org).

## New Corridor Development Certificate (CDC) Manual

As part of the Trinity River COMMON VISION Program, the NCTCOG and the Floodplain Management Task Force composed of local communities and interested parties have been working to update the Corridor Development Certificate (CDC) Manual over the last two fiscal years. The need for this revision of the CDC Manual from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Edition was identified to address technological advances as well as a few out dated items including the Regulatory Zone map, exemptions, hydraulic model, and other topics.

Major changes resulting from this update process include:

- Clarification of the required analysis of



the Standard Project Flood

- Clarification as to the Regulatory Zone being the 100 year FEMA floodplain as identified by the local floodplain administrator
- Notes that the purpose of CDC is not to override city development authority or to replace any state of federal program
- Clarification of definitions, significant

digits in certain calculations and permit criteria

- Addition of Significant Temporary Construction to the Common Regional Criteria
- Modification of application data requirements
- Updated structure and revised cost recovery fees for applications

The new CDC Manual was approved by the Trinity Steering Committee in July 2009. The Floodplain Management Task Force is currently working towards approving updated flow models developed by the USACE through Fort Worth.

For more information, contact Audra Valamides, Public Works Coordinator, at (817) 608-2341 or [avalamides@nctcog.org](mailto:avalamides@nctcog.org).

## Recent Publications

**Draft Executive Order for Floodplain Management** (click [here](#) to view)

**Flood Management Handbook** by the Regional Flood Management Council in the Houston-Galveston Area, July 2009

**Mapping the Zone: Improving Flood Map Accuracy** by the National Research Council

## Local Staff Changes

**Joe Sherwin, P.E., C.F.M.**, previously the Floodplain Administrator in Grand Prairie, is now the City Engineer for Hurst.

**Gabe Johnson, P.E., P.H., C.F.M.**, is now the Floodplain Administrator for the City of Grand Prairie.

**Rob Connell** is now the local NFIP representative for FEMA.

## Upcoming Events

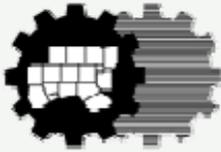
**Floodplain Management Seminar and CFM Exam in Fort Worth**—Dec 9 (email [tfma@verizon.net](mailto:tfma@verizon.net) to register)

**10th Annual Conference on Science, Policy and the Environment in Washington D.C.** —Jan 20-22 (visit <http://ncseonline.org/conference/greenecology/> for more info)

**9th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference in Seattle, Washington**—Feb 4-6 (visit <http://www.newpartners.org/> for more info)

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**Trinity River COMMON VISION**

a **SAFE** Trinity River, with stabilization and reduction of flooding risks,

a **CLEAN** Trinity River, with fishable and swimmable waters,

an **ENJOYABLE** Trinity River, with recreational opportunities linked by a trails system within a world-class greenway,

a **NATURAL** Trinity River, with preservation and restoration of riparian and cultural resources,

a **DIVERSE** Trinity River, with local and regional economic, transportation and other public needs addressed.

For additional information regarding the COMMON VISION contact:

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